



## **THE SOUND OF THE NORTHWEST SPRING CONCERT**



**Saturday, June 3, 2023  
7:00 p.m**

**at**

**Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute  
104 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
Seattle, Washington**

## **From Our Artistic Director – Vanessa Wells Bruce**



**Temporary photo – head shot is forthcoming**

**This season of the Sound of the Northwest has been full of wonderful experiences. Our first concert in the Fall honored our Founder, the late Juan Huey-Ray. In December, we had the privilege to sing with the Seattle Jazz Repertory Orchestra in their performance of Duke Ellington’s Sacred Concert. January was exciting as we began a collaboration with Seattle JazzEd, when we invited young and adult singers and families to our group. We expanded our repertoire to include more gospel. In February, we celebrated Black History Month by singing at St. Margaret’s Church in Bellevue, WA. Another collaboration happened in March when we performed with the Northwest Chamber Chorus in concert at Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church. In April, we accepted an invitation to sing at a public meeting of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, our nation’s oldest Black Sorority.**

**We are planning an exciting 2023-24 Season, with collaborations with other musical groups as well as presenting more performances of spirituals and music by African and African American composers.**

**Tonight’s performance includes some of our traditional spirituals, but we will also be presenting music by women composers and arrangers. As we have watched the news in recent years, we have seen and heard the cries of people who have been oppressed. As the mother of a Black man, my heart broke to hear the voices of sons calling for their mothers as they were crushed and destroyed. My tears are for those women who have had to speak on behalf of their martyred children.**

**In America, we need to listen more to the voices of women who lift their voices to change society. Freedom is a tenet of our democratic nation. When freedom is at stake, we need more songs, more poetry, more art, and more discourse to protect our life and liberty. Listen to her voice, his voice, their voices. I hope you will be blessed and challenged by the message of the music.**

**Just as our ancestors looked to a Higher Power for strength and hope, we will close our concert with gospel songs that have their roots in the songs of our ancestors. The melodies, rhythms, and chords of the past can still be heard in today’s gospel music. “Total Praise” is a song that we sing to end every rehearsal and we will close this concert with the same. The lyrics, “Your peace you give me in time of the storm...” reminds us that, even when we experience difficulties in life, we still have a reason to smile.**

**One final thought - Feel free to clap your hands, stomp your feet, and sing along during the concert. We are a village**

## ***Siyahamba***

Arr. Doreen Rao

Originally a Zulu folk song of the church, in the 1980s, it became an anthem for the international protest of Apartheid in South Africa.

### **ZULU**

Siyahamb' ekukhanyeni kwenkos

### **ENGLISH**

We are marching in the light of God

## ***Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing***

Arranged by Roland Carter

Written in 1900, "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" was originally a poem written by James Weldon Johnson for a NAACP convention. The lyrics were put to music by his brother, J. Rosemond Johnson later. It is a prayer of thanksgiving and for freedom. The NAACP adopted the hymn as the "Negro National Anthem" in 1917. In present years, it is well-known as the Black National Anthem.

Lift every voice and sing,  
Till earth and heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the list'ning skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,  
Bitter the chast'ning rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
Yet with a steady beat,  
Have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,  
Out from the gloomy past,  
Till now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;  
Thou who hast by Thy might,  
Led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,  
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,  
May we forever stand,  
True to our God,  
True to our native land.

***Daniel, Daniel, Servant of the Lord***

arranged by Undine Moore

Many spirituals were sung to tell Bible stories. They were passed down through oral tradition.

This arrangement has a soloist who serves as the “preacher” and the choir responds as an “amen” corner. Call and response, common in spirituals.

Oh the king cried, “Oh! Daniel, Daniel.  
Oh! Daniel, Daniel,  
Oh! that-a Hebrew Daniel  
Servant of the Lord.

Among the Hebrew nation,  
One Hebrew, Daniel was found.  
They put him in a-the lion’s den.  
He stayed there all night long.

Now the king in his sleep was troubled,  
And early in the morning he rose,  
To find God had sent-a his angel down  
To lock the lion’s jaw.

Oh the king cried, “Oh! Daniel, Daniel.  
Oh! Daniel, Daniel,  
Oh! that-a Hebrew Daniel  
Servant of the Lord.

***Don’t You Let Nobody Turn You ‘Round***

Arranged by Lena McLin

This traditional spiritual was used as a “freedom song” during the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s. It is an anthem of determination, no matter the obstacles. Depending on the protest, the song has been adapted. It most recently was updated to include the line, “Ain’t gonna let no Ferguson turn me ‘round” as a response to the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.

Don’t you let nobody turn you ‘round,  
Turn you ‘round, turn you ‘round.  
Don’t you let nobody turn you ‘round,  
Keep the straight and the narrow way.

At the river of Jordan, baptism was at hand  
And John baptized the multitude for the save the sinner man.

Some they come by water and some they come by land,  
But when we get to heave we will shake each other’s hand.

## ***Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey***

Composed by Cora Jackson

Seattle Native, Cora Jackson, was a long-time member of the Sound of the Northwest Choir until she relocated to North Carolina. In her words, "Wouldn't Take Nothin'" comes from the realization that "my" journey was designed especially for me – certainly I have strayed from my path more than once, but God always provided a segue back...because of His omniscience, He knew I would wander. Sometimes I've sighed under stress or cried out from pain. Sometimes the road was full of rocks and my burdens outweighed my praise; doubt blocked my view and I had rest in order to get the correct vision. And sometimes, my faith in Him was all I had... yet it was always enough. The life I am living is a journey, mine alone. And.. Lord, I wouldn't take nothin' for my journey."

Said I wouldn't take nothin' for my journey now,  
I am ever pressin' forward, I am seeking higher ground.  
Got my mind made up, I just can't turn 'round.  
Said I wouldn't take nothin' for my journey.

Sometimes I have to sigh.  
Sometimes break down and cry.  
Sometimes pray all night through.  
Said I wouldn't take nothin' for my journey.

Sometimes stony the road.  
Sometimes heavy the load.  
Sometimes can't see my way,  
But I wouldn't take nothin' for my journey.

Sometimes the way is rough,  
Sometimes the goin' gets tough.  
Sometimes must walk by faith,  
But I wouldn't take nothin' for my journey.

## ***Ella's Song***

Composed by Bernice Johnson Reagon

Composed to honor the life and work of Ellen Baker, a woman who was active in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (aka NAACP) and later a co-founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference along with Dr. Martin Luther King and others, this song captures some of the words of that active woman in the struggle. Ms. Baker worked with young people to teach them the lessons of freedom and how to achieve it. These lessons are a call for us, even in this century, to keep encouraging one another to make our world a better place.

Since the 1950s, Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon has been a composer, song leader, scholar, teacher, and an activist for Civil Rights. She is the founder of the singing group, Sweet Honey in the Rock. She has won many awards for her music, publications, and activism.

We who believe in freedom cannot rest.  
We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes.

Until the killing of black men, black mothers' sons,  
Is as important as the killing of white men, white mother's sons.

That which touches me most is that I had a chance to work with people,  
Passing on to others that which was passed on to me.

To me young people come first, they have the courage where we fail,  
And if I can but shed some light as they carry us through the gale.

Not needing to clutch for power, not needing the light just to shine on me,  
I need to be wone in the number as we stand against tyranny.

Struggling myself don't mean a whole lot, I've come to realize  
That teaching others to stand up and fight is the only way my struggle survives.

I am a woman who speaks in a voice and I must be heard.  
At times I can be quite difficult, I'll bow to no man's word.

## ***Hope***

Composed by Ysaye Barnwell

Dr. Barnwell is a renowned singer composer, educator, producer, and humanitarian. She has been commissioned to compose music for choral, stage, film, and dance productions. She was a long-time member of the singing group, Sweet Honey in the Rock. Before devoting her talents to music, she was a professor at Howard University's College of Dentistry and a director of health programs in Washington. She has been a special guest and clinician for the Sound of the Northwest many times.

If we want hope to survive in this world today,  
Then every day we've got to pray on ... Teach on...  
Work on... March on... Sing on...

## ***Declaration of Trouble***

Composed by Vanessa Wells Bruce

This piece was composed in memory of the late Congressman John Lewis, of Georgia. He was a civil rights activist who, in his later life, worked tirelessly to ensure voting rights for all. His quote, "Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and help redeem the soul of America" and "Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble." This composition includes several of his famous words. It begins and ends with the traditional spiritual, "Wade in the Water."

Wade in the water  
Wade in the water, children  
Wade in the water,  
God's gonna trouble the water.

When in the course of human events  
When the streets are paved with violence,  
And the laws that are made just don't make sense  
Then we need to make some trouble.

If the truth's no longer evident  
In the Congress or the President.  
If life and liberty aren't fundament  
Then we need to make some trouble

Trouble...Make good trouble.  
Do it now.

We all must stand up for what is right.  
In the world we live, we are the Light.  
If not us, than who will lead the fight?  
We all must make some trouble.

Wade in the water  
Wade in the water, children  
Wade in the water  
Sometimes we gotta trouble the water

You are a light. You are the light.  
Don't let anyone dampen your light.  
Know the battle for peace is al-ready won.  
Take love and peace in the water.

***I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to be Free***

Billy Taylor

Originally performed as a jazz piano piece in 1963 and used as the opening song for a BBC film review program, words were added by Mr. Taylor and Dick Dallas. Nina Simone made the song widely known in 1967, at the height of the Civil Rights movement. Though that period in history has passed, people around the world suffer through oppression and inequality. This song's message is still the hope of many.

I wish I knew how it would feel to be free.  
I wish I could break all the chains holding me.  
I wish I could say all the things that I should say.  
Say 'em loud, say em' clear, for the whole wide world to hear.

I wish I could share all the love in my heart.  
Remove all the bars that would keep us a-part.  
I wish you could know what it means to be me,  
Then you'd see and agree that ev'ry one should be free.

I wish I could give all I'm longing to give.  
I wish I could live like I'm longing to live.  
I wish I could do all the things that can do.  
Though it's way overdue, I'd be starting anew.

I wish I could be like a bird in the sky,  
How sweet it would be if I found I could fly.  
I'd soar to the sun and look down at the sea,  
Then I'd sing 'cause I'd know how it feels to be free.



## ***I Can't Talk About Freedom***

Composed by Callie Mackenzie

There are very talented young composers who are writing music to make us think and challenge us to be better citizens of the world. Callie Mackenzie is one of those artists. They have studied history and have put music words of hope for today's generation in modern styles. They based this song on a quote of Assata Shakur.

I wake up wiping all the sleep from my eye  
It's just another day but we know we gotta try  
If we want to get there.

We keep saying that a change is gonna come  
Waiting for the day we're sitting feeling joyous in the sun.  
And we don't feel no pain.

We keep talking 'bout a liberated place  
The type of place that recognizes the value of my face.  
But we don't know where it is?

I don't know where I'm going  
But I know where I've been  
I can tell you more about what it isn't  
That what it is.

I can't talk about freedom 'cause I've never been free  
I can't talk about freedom  
But i can share a vision of what it might be

I see joy on all the faces of the youth  
I see that they are learning history that's full of truth  
And they'll be playing.

Abundant food for everyone who needs to eat  
No need to break our backs just to make ends meet  
And we'll be thriving

No want for nothing that we need to keep us whole  
Making space to do the things that feed & nourish our souls  
Is that Freedom?

We're dreaming of freedom  
We're fighting for freedom  
Even though we don't know what it is  
We are going to get there

We've gotta know where we're going  
We know all about where we've been  
We talk more about what it isn't  
Than what it is.

We know what freedom should be.

## ***Oh, Freedom***

Traditional

This traditional spiritual was sung by enslaved Americans. The plea was to release via two ways of escape – going to heaven or being released from servitude. In the 1950s and 60s, the song made a resurgence during the Civil Rights era. Everyone today should feel free, as those in the nineteenth century prayed.

Oh, freedom. Oh freedom.  
Oh freedom over me,  
And before I'd be a slave  
I'd be buried in my grave  
And go home to my Lord  
And be free.

## ***Say Her Name***

Composed by Alysia Lee

This original song was written as a vehicle to protest brutality against Black lives, especially that of Black women. "If You say the name, you're prompted to learn the story, and if you know the story, then you have broader sense of all the ways Black bodies are made vulnerable to police violence." We dedicate this song to victims and families of those who have died locally and nationally, either at the hand of law enforcement or because of their negligence. This list is far from complete, for brutality has been very much of American history. This list includes people who have lost their lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The song includes only mentions some of the names, but we remember them all.

Say her name. She cannot be forgotten by us.  
Put her name in the air. Say her name.

*Herbert Hightower 9/8/2004*  
*John T. Williams 8/19/2010*  
*Trayvon Martin 2/26/2012*  
*Eric Garner 7/17/2014*  
*Michael Brown 8/9/2014*  
*Tamir Rice 11/22/2014*  
*Walter Scott 4/4/2015*  
*Alton Sterling 7/4/2016*  
*Philando Castile 7/6/2016*  
*Charleena Lyles 6/19/2017*

*Stephon Clark 3/18/2018*  
*Breonna Taylor 3/13/2020*  
*Terry Caver 5/19/2020*  
*George Floyd 5/25/2020*  
*Horace Lorenzo Anderson 6/20/2020*  
*Antonio Mays Jr. 6/29/2020*  
*Summer Taylor 7/4/2020*  
*Derek Hayden 2/16/2021*  
*Daunte Wright 4/1/2021*

### ***One By One***

Composed by Diane White Clayton

Known as “Dr. Dee” in the music field, Dr. Diane White-Clayton believes in the healing power of music. It can heal, uplift, and connect people. “One By One” encourages us, as singers, and the audience to let go of pride and fears in order to walk together in love. We may come from differing backgrounds, but we can make the world better together.

One by one my one by one,  
Let us walk together.  
Different, no two the same.  
Letting go yet holding on.

One by one by one by one,  
Step by step, we journey,  
And we're gonna make it  
Listening loudly to the call.  
Letting go yet holding on.

One by one we're all connected,  
As we walk along this road.  
One by one with all respected,  
Letting go yet holding on.

We are letting go of pride and fears;  
And holding on to love  
Because we need each other, my sister, my brother

### ***I Smile***

Composed by Kirk Franklin

This song was the first single released to urban adult contemporary radio. Kirk Franklin says that it's a fun urban melody that is a declarative statement that I'm not going to live my life based on how I feel.” It features music quotes from the S.O.S. Band's single, “Tell Me if you Still Care” and Little Feet's song, “Fool Yourself.” It won several music awards for Mr. Franklin.

To-day's a new day, but there is no sunshine,  
No-thin' but clouds and it's dark in my heart and it feels like a cold night.  
Today's a new day, but where are my blue skies?  
Where is the love and the joy that you promised me? Tell me it's alright.  
I al-most gave up, but a power that I can't ex-plain  
Fell from heaven like a shower now:

I smile. Even though I hurt, see I smile.  
I know God is working so I smile.  
Even though I been here for a while, I smile.  
Smile. It's so hard to look up when you get down.  
Sure would hate to see you give up now.  
You look so much better when you smile, so smile.

Smile for me.

***Holy Is the Lamb***  
Composed by Jacqueline Hardy

Holy is the Lamb.  
Worthy is the Lamb.  
Mighty is the Lamb.

***Total Praise***

Composed by Richard Smallwood

Richard Smallwood, a prolific gospel composer from Washington, DC, penned this beautiful hymn when two of his loved ones were dealing with serious illnesses and he was their caregiver. In his quiet moments, he felt abandoned by God. He was prompted to write a song from the text of a Psalm. He gained strength to continue through the words. This song has become a well-known anthem.

Lord, I will lift my eyes to the hills  
Knowing my help is coming from You.  
Your peace You give me in time of the storm.

You are the source of my strength.  
You are the strength of my life.  
I lift my hands in total praise to You.

Amen